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THE ETHNIC COMMUNAL SYSTEM

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CHAPTER III

THE ETHNIC COMMUNAL SYSTEM

The movement of immigrants into Yankee City took the form of straggling columns of individuals and families stretching back to different lands, and to widely scattered villages and areas in each land. In one sense, even those individuals and families from the same foreign land at arrival were often as much strangers to each other as they were to the natives of Yankee City. But the wide cultural disparity between the personalities of the native and the immigrant ethnic worked to repel and isolate the latter from the former. On the other hand, the cultural unanimity between the personalities of ethnic expatriates from the same country, together with the common breach separating them from the Yankee City natives, soon after their first arrival brought them to fraternization, and to an identity as a group. In this first phase, lacking any semblance of formal organization in their internal relations, the group, in only the most elementary sense, constituted a community.

In the second phase, the group having grown to a population of roughly one hundred, their residences, hitherto scattered through the City, began to coalesce, and the group thereby acquired something of a spatial, ecological focus. At this point, which generally fell about a decade after the arrival of the first families, there also occurred two other developments. First, the adults in the group gathered in each other's homes for informal worship, whereby to reassert their ancestral religious behaviors and attitudes and to extend sacred sanctions to the new group. Second, one of the group opened a small provisions store in the midst of the group's settlement, stocking especially foodstuffs of the ancestral type, and enabling the group to maintain its own native culinary tradition. At the same time, this store immediately took the place of the market place in the home village as a focus for the group's informal relations, and as a community center, especially for the men, who gathered there for all their leisure hours

in something of an informal type of association. In this phase, which persisted generally for somewhat less than a decade, the group was organized around three foci--the settlement, the store, and religious worship--but such organization was still informal and unstructured.

After almost another decade, usually, as the group continued to grow in numbers, its population rising to 150 or 200, its residences gathering more closely together, it passed into a third phase with emergence as a formally organized community. The first formal structure to appear, with certain exceptions to be reviewed below, was that of the church, followed in a few years by that of the group's school.

With these two structures forming the communal system, the group passed, within another decade, into its fourth and final phase, when the men's informal association, centered on the store, crystallized into a formal--i.e., organized--association. The formation of this first association structure was followed slowly by the emergence of separate formal associations for each sex and every broad age level from the adolescent up. Correlated with this phase is the group's residential dispersion, and its first important advances up Yankee City's ecological, economic, and social class hierarchies.

This general account of the more or less uniform sequence in the evolution of a complex ethnic communal system out of a group of originally atomistic, although commonly culture-patterned, family units may be supplemented by a more extended description of the structural configuration of each of the eight Yankee City ethnic communities as they appeared to the observer during the course of the present investigation. Thereby, we may provide, in more rounded form, the ethnic context within which, together with the Yankee City context sketched in the preceding chapter, the scientific problems of this study have their source. As already has been suggested, the ethnic communal system, in its most developed stage, consists of three types of structure--the church, the school, and the association--the salient characteristics of each of which, among the various ethnic groups, will be considered in turn. Given, however, that the Italians present the anomaly of not having created any of these communal structures, our account below will be confined to the seven other ethnic groups, with the problem raised by the Italian group to be reserved for later

treatment.

Among the seven Yankee City ethnic groups to be considered here, there exist four complete church structures--a Roman Catholic church in the Irish communal system, a Roman Catholic church in the French-Canadian communal system, an Eastern Orthodox church in the Greek communal system, and a Synagogue-Congregation in the Jewish communal system. Each of these structures, as we have already noted, was the first formal organization established by the group, was the nucleus of all later structural developments, and has remained the central and dominant motif in the configuration of the group's communal system.

But what of the other three Yankee City groups exhibiting communal systems? Two of these three, the Polish and the Russian, have no church structures of their own as yet, for a reason common to both. Both are the newest ethnic groups in the City, having arrived immediately before and after the Great War, attracted by the labor demands of the City's textile mills in their last prosperous flurry. In the middle twenties the local textile industry collapsed completely and finally. Before the Poles and Russians could effect a complete shift to other industries, the thirties and Depression had arrived. Hence, beginning with the late twenties, when at least the Poles might have been normally expected to emerge with a church organization, neither group has had the resources necessary to the founding and housing of a church. An added factor enters in the case of the Russians, who, unlike the Poles, were not large enough in population as late as 1933 to support their own church structure, even had economic conditions remained propitious.

In the face of these circumstances, the Poles, being of the Roman Catholic faith, have continued to worship principally in the church of the Irish community, to which they were assigned from the beginning by the diocese officers. Given the language differences of the two groups, a Polish curate is sent to the Irish church periodically to receive the confessions of the Poles. The extension of the Irish church to the religious uses of the Poles, however, does not imply that the Poles are organized within the Irish communal system, but stand only in relations to the sacred symbols of the latter as these are organized in the church structure. The cultural orientation of the Irish now being overwhelmingly American, whereas that of the recently arrived Poles

Four of the seven ethnic groups with communal systems have complete church structures, but each of the seven is found to have a school structure, the seven schools being classifiable on the basis of curricula into three distinct types:

1. The folk-culture school
2. The folk-religion school
3. The parochial school

The first of these types is marked by a curriculum including the group's ancestral language, literature, and national history, whereas the curriculum of the second is devoted entirely to instruction in the group's ancestral religion.¹ Both are part-time schools--the former being conducted in the late afternoons of week days, the latter on Sundays--and both are intended to supplement rather than duplicate the work of the public grammar schools.

The school of the Polish community is of the first type, instruction in the group's folk-religion being left to the Irish parochial school, which many Polish children attend under somewhat the same conditions as the Polish adults attend the Irish church. The Russian group, however, with no church of its own or local church affiliations, combines in its school the curricula both of Types 1 and 2.

The Greeks also present both curricula, but instead of fusing them within one school structure, as have the Russians, they have organized each in a separate school structure, one as the Afternoon School, and the other as the Sunday School, each with separate teachers, and each supervised by separate sub-committees of the communal committee which manages the secular affairs of the group's church. The Hebrew school of the Jewish group, on the other hand, like the Russian school, incorporates both types of curricula. The Armenian community offers no instruction in the folk-religion. Rather, the children attend the Sunday Schools of the two native churches to which their parents are formally articulated, where the sacred symbols are presented not in the ancestral context as they are in the Russian, Greek, or Hebrew schools, for example, but in the context of American Protestantism. The effect is immediately apparent in the shift of the grown members of the Armenian F¹ generation from their group congregations

¹For a definition of the parochial-school type, see p. 66, below.

to the native church structures. However, both Armenian congregations coöperate through a single committee to maintain a school structure with a folk-culture curriculum.

The progressive infiltration of American elements into the internal structures of the ethnic communal system is well illustrated in the case of the school structure. In the schools of the two newest Yankee City groups, the Russian and the Polish, there is no suggestion of American influence as yet. In essentials, these schools are as completely oriented to the ancestral culture as were such school structures in the homelands.

The Greeks and Armenians made their first entrance into Yankee City in the same decade, but about a decade before the Poles and Russians. Their school curricula also are untouched as yet by American influences, but symbolically, and in a secular sense, ritualistically, American elements have now begun to intrude. To use the Greek school as an example, the room where its classes meet is decorated by both American and Greek flags, and by pictures of Aristotle and George Washington. In the school's annual graduation exercises, enacted for members of the group alone, the opening prayer by the priest generally beseeches blessings for, among others, both the United States and Greece, both the Greek national anthem and "America" are sung, the teacher's address is generally on such matters as "The Promise and Knowledge of America and Greece," and the children recite such numbers as "For America and Greece," "The Immigrant," and "I Know Both Languages."

If the Russian and Polish schools represent the first stage, and the Greek and Armenian schools the second stage, in the shifting orientation of the school structures from the ancestral society to the American society, the Hebrew school of the Jewish group (which is about a decade older in Yankee City than the Greek and the Armenian groups) is found in the third stage. For not only symbolically and ceremonially have American elements intruded, but curricularly as well. For, in addition to teaching the Hebrew language, the Bible, Hebrew literature, and Jewish history, courses also are presented on the history of Jews in the United States, and the contributions of the Jews to American history. And unlike the schools of the four younger groups, English is here the primary language of instruction.

the grades, are given far more time in the aggregate.

In the parochial school of the Irish, who are much the oldest ethnic group in Yankee City, the folk-culture elements have long since been dropped. Even in the "Green Isle," the Irish were already bi-lingual, and almost immediately upon arriving in Yankee City they dispensed with their Gaelic. No language other than English, therefore, has ever been taught in the Irish school. However, Irish history was presented down to about 1910, when it was discontinued. Hence, for the last twenty-five years the Irish parochial school, except for its religious indoctrination, has differed none in its curriculum from the Yankee City public schools.

We may now complete the sequence in the changing curricular content among the seven Yankee City ethnic schools. If the function of the Hebrew school curriculum is to produce individuals who are a balanced combination of both Jew and American, then the function of the French-Canadian curriculum is to produce individuals who are first American and Catholic, and only secondarily French-Canadian, and the function of the curriculum of the Irish school is to produce individuals who are solely American and Catholic.

The progressive course of the Americanization of an ethnic structure may now be seen in its full length by the schools at the extremes of the sequence. The school of the group newest in Yankee City is as yet completely oriented to the ancestral society, whereas the school of the group oldest in the City is now completely oriented to the American society. Further, the schools of the other groups, in their relative orientation, arrange themselves in a regular order between these extremes, with a perfect correlation between this order and the temporal order of the group's exposure to the influences of American society.

The third category of structure created by the ethnic group is the association, by which is meant the voluntary, "interest" type of organization, whose most general function is the formalization of leisure behaviors. Random American examples are the D.A.R., the American Legion, the Y.M.C.A., the Elks, and the Boy Scouts.

It is to be observed that while the ethnic church and school structures, originally, are direct extensions and close reproductions of comparable structures in the group's homeland,

the association is a structural form without a prototype in most peasant areas of Europe, and is directly "borrowed" by the ethnics from American society in which the form has had so conspicuous a development.

The functions of the ethnic association are several, but fundamental is that of reinforcing the ethnic family structure when, under American influences, the family shifts from a centripetal to a centrifugal type of orientation. On the ancestral heath, most of the individual's leisure had been passed in concert with his family--which was an important aspect, among others, in the family's centripetal pattern. In Yankee City, however, the ethnic individual is faced with the conditions of having a larger proportion of leisure time available, as well as exposure to the external attractions underlying the compulsive urban pattern to spend the largest possible part of one's time beyond the confines of the home. These conditions tend to pull the ethnic individual centrifugally not only out of the family circle, but, in time, as recreational relations with natives are extended, also out of the larger circle of the ethnic community. American forms of organized leisure, therefore, are a potentially destructive force, weakening the traditional pattern of the ethnic family structure, and threatening the internal ties of the ethnic group on an exposed and unorganized flank. To defend itself against the threat, the ethnic group appropriates for its own uses, perhaps the most potent organized form of leisure in American society--the association. Thereby, by introducing the added woof of the association structure to the warp of family structures, the group reinforces the patterns of both the family and the communal system.

Hence the greater the age of an ethnic group in Yankee City and the greater the degree of its Americanization, the larger the number of associations in its communal system, such structures forming an increasingly complete sub-system embracing, finally, both sexes and every broad age level between the adolescent and the aged.

As it expands with time, the association sub-system gradually loses its ethnic content and absorbs American elements, becoming ultimately completely American in character. The associations, therefore, are devices for:

1. Regulating the pace of the shift from the ancestral to an American orientation of its members.

2. Serving, at the same time, to reinforce the family structure and the group's communal system while this shift is in process.

The generalization applies, of course, to all three types of ethnic structures, but most strongly to the associations, that they insure the conversion to a complete American orientation of its members, not individual by individual--which would shatter the group--but in concert with the group. Thus, the Yankee City Irish, who, in all but a few isolated respects are completely American in behavior and outlook, still maintain a very strong group identity and elaborate communal system.

We have already observed that the church is the first communal structure to emerge, followed soon by the school, and about a decade later by an association. This first association embraces the middle-aged, but younger half of the P^1 generation men. Then, in intervals of several years, appear association structures for the following in approximately this order: the young-adult and P^2 generation men, the F^1 generation sub-adult boys, the F^1 adolescent boys, the F^1 generation adolescent girls, the F^1 generation sub-adult girls, the young-adult and P^2 generation women, and the middle-aged and younger half of the P^1 generation women. This sequential pattern has exceptions among the two groups who have most rapidly come in contact with the natives and who have been quickest in ascending the Yankee City status-hierarchies--namely, the Jews and the Armenians--with the effect of early alteration of the traditional position of the women. And, in these groups, the development of female associations parallels those of the men step by step, although with some time lag.

The association sub-system appears in completed form among the Irish, the French-Canadians, the Jews, and the Armenians, the four oldest ethnic communities in Yankee City, and its pattern may be schematically represented (Fig. 6).

In this fully developed form, the association sub-system consists of structures differentiated according to two sexes, three generations, and four age-grades. Theoretically, then, a child at adolescence may enter the sub-system at his age level^A, and thereafter proceed through each successive age-grade association on his side of the sex line. Actually, this type of progression does not occur because the age-grades to a large degree are identified with generation levels, and the symbolic content of an association structure embracing an older generation inevitably has

	Male	Female
45-60 yrs (P')	# 1	# 8
25-45 (P ²)	# 2	# 7
18-25 (F')	# 3	# 6
12-18 (F')	# 4	# 5

Fig. 6.--The complete association sub-system of an ethnic communal system.

too many ethnic elements to accord with the interests and personality types of the next younger ethnic generation. Hence, as the P¹ generation dies out, the P² generation does not move into the P¹ association structure. Rather, the latter ceases to exist, and the association structure of the P² generation moves to the top level in the sub-system. Individuals do not progress upward in the sub-system, but, escalator-like, association structures do.

If the four oldest ethnic groups present completely developed association sub-systems, the three youngest groups are found with association structures proliferated progressively in that direction. For example, the Russians have only one association and that corresponding to 1 in Figure 6. The Poles have three association structures, equivalent to those designated as 1, 2 and 3. The Greeks, a group somewhat younger in the City than the Armenians, and considerably less mobile in the City's hierarchies, have associations corresponding to those marked 1, 2, and 3. In none of these three ethnic groups have any female associations appeared as yet, the factor responsible being that the women in these groups are still held to their traditional position in the family structure. However, there have been preliminary, if futile, gestures

from the younger P² generation Greek women in the direction of "getting together." It may be predicted on the basis of this development, however timid, that within a decade the Greek female age-grades will have been organized into association structures to fill out the group's association sub-system.

Two other aspects of these associational sub-systems remain to be considered. Not only are the structures in each sub-system differentiated by age, sex, and generation, but they are also differentiated, first in their division of communal functions, and second, in their symbolic content.

In the fatherland, the village through a council of elders, generally, had performed the offices essential to its own existence, such as collecting taxes, supervising the common lands and woods, maintaining roads, assisting the poor, etc. In Yankee City, however, the ethnic group has no legal, political identity, and hence its general functions have come to be divided among the various associations in the adult age levels.

Thus, for example, the association designated 1 on the chart above (Fig. 6) has what is called the "benefit" function, by which is meant that of providing a family with the financial means to carry it through the crisis of its bread-winner's death. The Jewish association of this type supplements this function with that of preparing the dead for burial, and managing the group's cemetery. The female association covering the top age-grade (8) generally assumes the responsibility of raising and dispensing funds for families in the group reduced to need. The men's association, 2, in most cases, provides a club house as a recreational center for all the men of the group. Associations 2 and 7 divide supervision of the sub-adult associations, and management and financing of the group's folk-culture school. Association 2, in particular, is generally in charge of the total-group recreational affairs such as the annual picnics, festivals, dances, etc., and also serves as the liaison between the natives and the group when the latter is invited to participate in certain all-Yankee City ceremonies. Finally, all the associations, to some degree at least, recognize obligations to help maintain the group's church and school structures, either in money or services or both. As a specific instance, there is the case of the Jewish community, whose associations are all nominally independent of the Synagogue-Congregation. Yet when the Congregation moved to acquire a new

synagogue edifice, the associations immediately contributed heavily from their treasuries and organized intensive fund-raising campaigns for the purpose, at the sacrifice of their normal "programs."

The ethnic associations, then, have a multiplicity of functions, general and specific, such as bolstering the family structure, assisting the church and school structures, organizing the group's recreations, dispensing charity, linking the group with the Yankee City society, and in the large, unifying and integrating the entire communal system.

Finally, among the various structures composing a group's association sub-system, there is a differentiation according to the type of symbolism which is the association's ideal focus. On this criterion, we can discriminate four distinct types of ethnic associations, as follows:

1. The ancestral-national
2. The bi-national
3. The American-national
4. The sacred

The first type is found only among the Armenians and the Jews. In both groups, these associations are chapter units in more or less world-wide "orders," each of which is directed to restoration of the ancestral homeland--that is, Armenia or Palestine--to some degree of political independence. These orders represent the organized efforts of each ancestral society to regain the national status it had long since lost. In earlier years, while Ireland was struggling for independence from England, the Yankee City Irish likewise had an association, since disbanded, which was a chapter in a nationalist type of fraternal order. The names of these organizations are themselves suggestions of their ancestral-national focus--e.g., the Armenian Republican Federation, the Hadassah, and the Hibernians.

There is evidence, however, that the ancestral-national associations among both the Jews and the Armenians are declining in importance. Of the five original Zionist organizations in the Jewish community, only two now remain, having been replaced by associations with different symbolic foci. And even these two, both female, are now more heavily weighted with purely group functions, their only nationalist activities consisting of fund-raising for the "cause." Likewise, of the six original ancestral-national

national associations have been established by members of the P^2 generation. It is plain, therefore, that the difference in national emphasis between the two types of associations is a manifestation of the difference in personality orientation between members of the two generations. By this we mean that the P^1 personality tends largely to adhere to the behavior patterns, attitudes, and symbols of his ancestral society, whereas the P^2 personality tends to combine and balance behavior patterns, attitudes, and symbols of both the ancestral and the American society, with somewhat greater adherence, however, to those of the former, as is seen in the fact that meetings of the P^2 association in almost all cases are conducted in the ancestral language.

Similarly, the American-national type of association draws its members almost exclusively from the native-born, native-educated, F generation, reflecting again the generation's personality orientation. This association type is found among the Irish, the French-Canadians, and the Jews, the only groups in which a sizeable proportion of the F^1 generation, at least, has reached maturity. These organizations are the Knights of Columbus and the Daughters of Isabella in the Irish group, the Catholic Order of Foresters in the French-Canadian group, and the Knights of Pythias in the Jewish group, all parts of American fraternal orders, and all lacking any but American symbols. Their credos can all be summed up in the phrase "for God and Country." It may have been observed above that the Jews were rather exceptional in not presenting a bi-national type of association structure. The exception is explained by the fact that the Jewish P^2 generation has joined with the F^1 generation in the group's American-national association, namely, the Knights of Pythias.

The fourth type of ethnic association is that organized around sacred symbols and is found in conjunction only with the Roman Catholic Church structures of the Irish and the French-Canadians. These are associations inspired and controlled by the church, led by priest or nun, named for a saint, and appearing on all age levels and in each sex division. Their functions are supplementary religious instruction, regularization of church attendance (the members in a body attend Mass monthly), and ritualization of the dead through special periodic Masses for deceased members. One Yankee City priest has defined them as "supererogatory," but, in addition, they serve to encompass the group rigidly

within the church fold, and negatively, to forestall any straying into native associations organized around Protestant symbols such as the Knights Templar.

As has been indicated, the associations of this fourth type are differentiated according to age-grade and sex, but not according to generation. All generations are embraced in these associations, which are devoid of any national symbolism, and are purely accessory structures to the church. In fact, alone among ethnic groups, the Irish and the French-Canadians have two distinct association sub-systems, one secular and one sacred, with overlapping memberships, and each complete in the sense of being divided into structures for each sex and every broad age-level, with only the former differentiated for ethnic generation. However, even the secular associations in these groups incorporate some Roman Catholic symbolism, and while nominally independent of the local church structure, actually they contribute regularly to the church funds and are closely supervised by the priest.

While most of the ethnic associations fall under the rubric of one of the four types classified and described above, there are some which are local and communal in orientation, bear neither national nor sacred symbols, and whose functions are largely or exclusively recreational. These are found especially in the youngest age-grades of both sexes.

Up to this point, we have attempted to give a brief account of the various ethnic communal systems in terms of their component structures. Here we must describe, as succinctly as possible, the pattern, if any, of these communal systems in terms of the interrelations existing between the structures.

In the Irish and French-Canadian groups, the communal pattern is that of the parish, at whose center is the church and the priest. The parochial school and the sacred associations are appendages of the church structure, are controlled by the priest and his clerical subordinates, and are housed in church property. The secular associations, on the other hand, have their own private clubhouses, and explicitly, at least, are not subaltern to the church. However, in their roster of officers, that of chaplain is invariably filled by a curate--most often, apparently, at the instance of the priest himself. Hence, the priest maintains strong controls over these organizations, not through any defined authority, but through the force of his prestige as sacred shepherd to

the group, and as kingpin in the group's communal system.

How tightly the priest integrates this parish system may be judged from the fact that he has important relations with any given member of the group through the latter's home, which the priest visits periodically; through the latter's children, whom the priest supervises in the parochial school; through the church rite and the confessional, through the individual's membership in a sacred association, and through the individual's membership in a secular association. In a functional sense, the priest is indeed "Father" to the entire communal system, whose pattern we have represented in Figure 7.

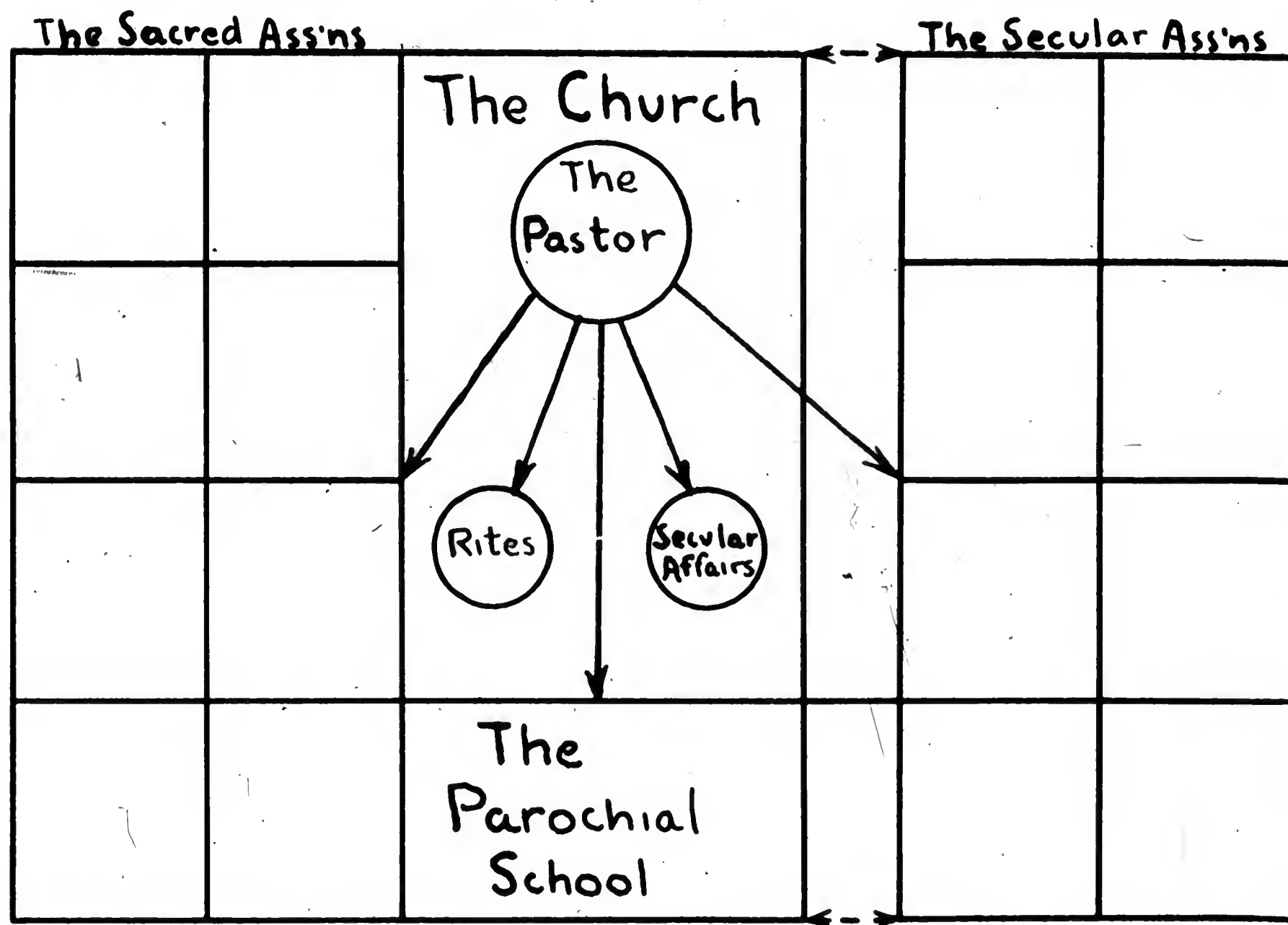


Fig. 7.--Pattern of Roman Catholic parish type of communal system.

Quite different is the configuration of the Greek communal system, owing principally to the fact that authority in a Roman Catholic parish is theocratic, whereas in an Eastern Orthodox parish it is democratic. That is to say, the role of the Greek priest is traditionally confined to performance of the sacred rites, and beyond that circumscribed sphere he has little or no

authority. Even the secular affairs of the church structure are out of his hands, and in those of the group itself, the group delegating its own authority to its elected representatives in a body called the Church Committee. This committee selects the priest, fixes and pays his salary, and in general stands as employer to the priest as employee. Sub-committees of the Church Committee manage the group's two school structures; hence these schools are formally adjuncts of the church. Actually, however, the Afternoon School has been taught by lay teachers, and is devoid of any religious content in its curriculum. Hence the committee, in controlling this school, seems to be functioning in behalf of the group at large, as did the Council in the villages of Greece, rather than in behalf of the church specifically. The committee, therefore, in its secular authority, seems to stand in the same position to the Greek communal system as does the priest to the Irish and French-Canadian systems. Unlike the Catholic priest, however, neither the Church Committee nor the Greek priest has any defined connections with the Greek associations, although a portion of the latter's content, it will be remembered, is nominally religious.

The Greek associations, therefore, would seem to be only weakly articulated to the rest of the Greek group's communal system. To correct this situation, the Greeks have used their priest to integrate the system fully--this without formally enhancing his authority. That is, he is invited as guest of honor to special meetings of all associations, to the graduation ceremonies of both Greek schools, and to all total-group affairs, such as picnics, dances, etc.

The office of priest, thereby, newly converted to a symbol of the group, has had its secular functions and prestige extended, if not its authority; and reciprocally, has extended sacred sanctions to the rest of the Greek communal system. At the group's own initiative, the priest, in his office, now serves to tie the various component structures into a relatively integrated communal system. In Figure 8, the pattern of this integration is schematically represented.

In the Jewish group, prior to 1935, there was no formal articulation between the Synagogue-Congregation, the Hebrew school,

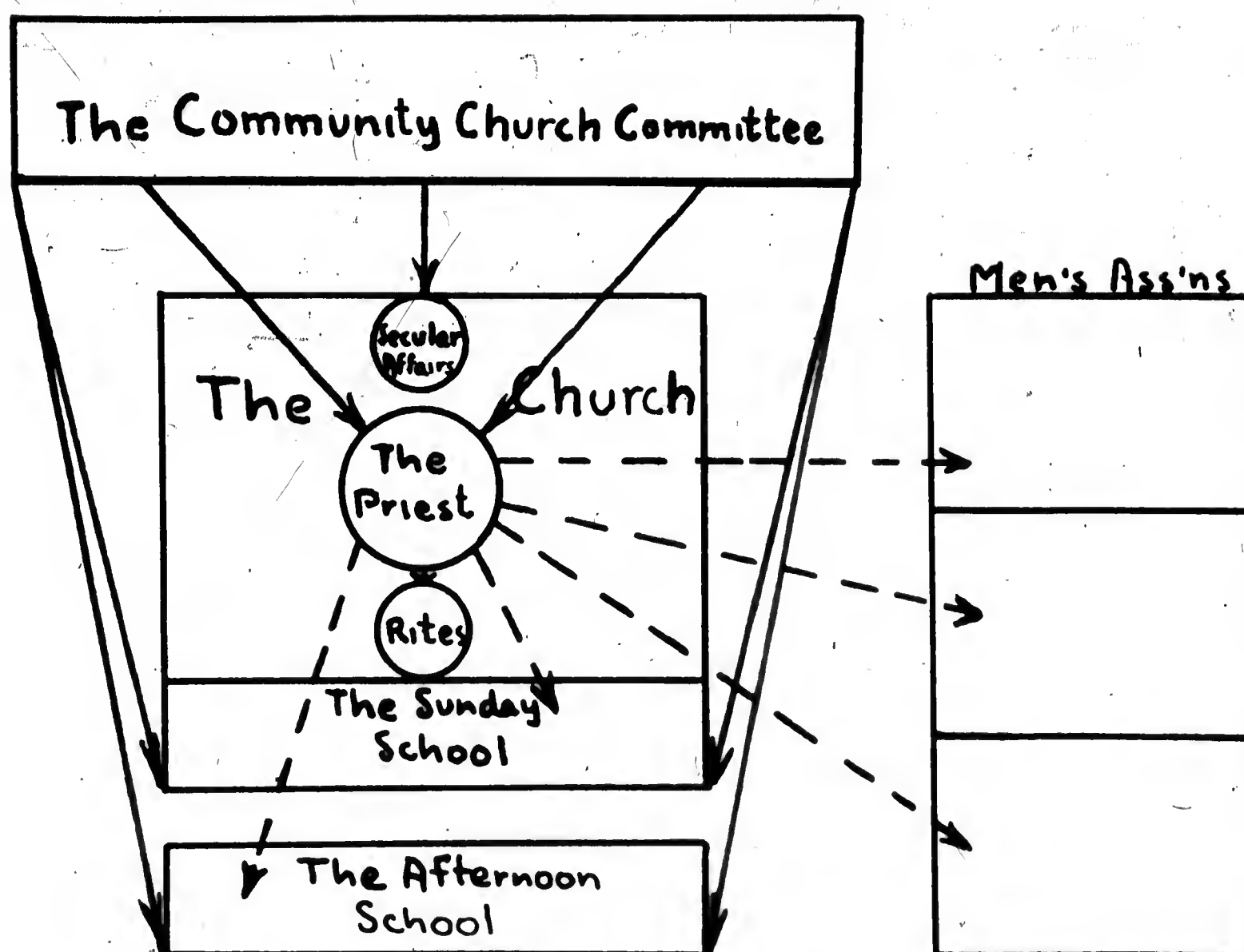


Fig. 8.--Pattern of Greek communal system.

and the various association structures.² There was, however, the focal articulation provided by the fact that school classes, association meetings, and all-group affairs were always held within the synagogue building. Second, the minimum of informal articulation was provided by the overlapping between Congregation, school committee, and association memberships.

With 1935, the group acquired the first rabbi. The office traditionally has far more prestige but little more formal authority than has that of the Greek priest. It is of interest, therefore, that upon his arrival, the rabbi immediately assumed an integrating function similar to that described for the priest in the Greek group. Hence the structural configuration of the Jewish communal system, in essentials, resembles that of the Greek communal system, except that the association sub-system of the latter is in a less developed stage than is that of the former.

²It should be explained that the rabbi's traditional role is one of interpreter of the sacred law and moral guide to the group. He has no specialized indispensable function, moreover, in the ritual of the synagogue. The absence of a rabbi in the Yankee City Jewish group before 1935 affected little, therefore, the normal functions of the Synagogue-Congregation.

Finally, in the Armenian, Polish, and Russian groups, the articulative pattern of the communal system still has somewhat the same form as that of the Jewish group prior to 1935.

It has been necessary to treat the Italians as a group apart, since they present the anomaly of never having progressed beyond the second phase of communal development defined earlier in this chapter. Although the Italians date their first arrival in Yankee City from the nineties, they presented no structural formations whatever even by 1935--neither church, school, nor association--nor, on present evidence, is there any likelihood that such will develop in the future. In the sense here used, therefore, they have no communal system. They are informally organized, however, in two mutually exclusive factions, each of which is divided into a series of informal, interlocking cliques. Notwithstanding this retarded development, the Italians, in their own eyes, and especially in those of Yankee City, have something of a group identity.

The factors responsible for the unusual failure of the Italians to organize their own communal structures are two. In the first place, the group is split into two factions on sectional lines, according to origin in North (and Central) Italy or South Italy (and Sicily). Between the two sections in Italy itself there have been sharp antagonisms of long history, with the northern section considering itself the more advanced and superior of the two. This attitude, and its complement generated in the southern section, have been brought to Yankee City with immigrants from both areas, militating against any social intercourse between the two sectional groups, and dividing the Italians into two antipathetic factions. Widening the breach further has been the fact that the north Italians preceded the south Italians into Yankee City by ten to twenty years. Hence the former were already economically established and partially Americanized when their "green," impoverished compatriots from southern Italy first appeared on the local scene. The usual superior disdain of those carried in an earlier immigrant wave for those of a later wave asserted itself in this case, also, and reinforced by the historic sectional attitudes, severed the two sets of Italians from the beginning into two irreconcilable sub-groups.

The second factor is that the total population of the Italians has been consistently small, numbering scarcely three

hundred even as late as 1935. Had the group been larger, it is not improbable that each of the two sub-groups would have created its own communal structures, much, under parallel circumstances, as have German Jews and Polish Jews in many American cities. As it was, however, neither of the sub-groups had large enough numbers to organize and support its separate church, school, and associations. Furthermore, even given their present population, had the Italians been homogeneous sectionally, it is likewise probable that they would have established a communal system as have other Yankee City ethnic groups with populations no larger, and, in some cases, actually smaller. In short, the sectional schism, the time difference in local arrival, together with inadequate numbers, account for the fact that the Italians, alone among Yankee City ethnic groups, have not passed beyond the second, informal phase of communal development.

Given, however, that the Italians are all Roman Catholic in their religion, and given that the Irish church structure is far the older of the two local Roman Catholic churches, the Italians, at the instance of the diocese, have affiliated themselves, in family units rather than as a group, with the church structure in the Irish community. Likewise, many of the Italian children have attended the Irish parochial school, and a few Italians even appear in certain of the Irish associations. Hence the Italians are indirectly organized by their affiliation with the Irish communal system. Although the Italians have been formally affiliated with the Irish communal system, this did not imply, originally, that thereby they were incorporated into the Irish group. Culture differences between them barred any direct merging in the identities and memberships of the two groups. Nevertheless, given that some Italians have dropped many of their specifically Italian culture patterns, and the Irish have dropped very nearly all of their specifically Irish culture elements, the gap between the personality types of the two groups has been progressively narrowing. This fact, together with that of the long formal relations between the two groups, has worked increasingly to expand the participation, formal and informal, of Italians in the Irish community, and even to induce the beginnings of actual absorption of Italians into the Irish group itself, as is seen in the fact of the high and growing incidence of intermarriage between members of the two groups. Merging of the two groups seems now definitely in process.

In summary, we have indicated that the ethnic communal system develops first by the informal organization of originally atomistic family units of common background, and grows by the crystallization first of a church structure organized around the ancestral sacred symbols, then of a school structure focussed on both sacred and secular culture symbols of the group's ancestral society. Upon these as a base, there then arises a superstructure of associations which sort out the group by age, sex, and generation, divide group responsibilities, and which betray differential and shifting orientation between ancestral and American symbols. Such shift in orientation also was observed in the school structure, if at a somewhat slower pace; similarly, although we were lacking the space to present our extensive evidence, it may be asserted that the same shift is found in the church structure--but again, at a considerably slower pace.

The slow infiltration of American elements into the ethnic structures is manifestation, although operating with a time lag of almost a generation, of the rapid conversion of the ethnic family structure to an American pattern, and the more rapid conversion still of the ethnic individual to a personality of the American type. These conversions at different levels are seen to be accompanied by increasing elaboration and integration in the group's communal system.

In fine, the function of the ethnic communal system, like that of the forty-year hegira of the ancient Hebrews under Moses, from Egypt to Canaan, is to fortify the group's cohesiveness while it makes the long and difficult transition from the stage of European peasantry to the stage of American urbanism.